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Assembly California Legislature



LORI SALDAÑA

SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SEVENTY-SIXTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES:
ELECTIONS AND REDISTRICTING
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
REVENUE AND TAXATION
VETERANS AFFAIRS

CHAIR, LEGISLATIVE WOMEN'S
CAUCUS

June 24, 2010

Sam Schuchat
Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat,

I am writing to endorse the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's application for funding to conduct habitat restoration in Swan Canyon, located in the community of City Heights, San Diego County. I am very familiar with degraded habitat of the canyon, related public safety concerns, and the growing lack of safe access for public use and enjoyment of our open spaces.

Many of the canyons in San Diego County offer the only access to the natural environment for some of our poorest and most socio-culturally diverse residents, but most are degraded. They have become vectors for insects, homes for transients and sites of increased criminal activities that ultimately affect the entire community. Fortunately, our local police and volunteers are getting better at managing these situations in canyons and riverbeds, but more support for their efforts is needed.

In addition, the invasive, non-native vegetation that has filled the canyon, particularly the tall and thick stands of *arundo donax*, often contributes to illegal activities and serves as a threat to both the native plants and the safety of members of the community as a whole. I have participated in many clean-up efforts to remove these plants, and it is difficult work that requires considerable volunteer labor.

With the Conservancy's assistance, we have an important and timely opportunity to restore and steward these urban canyons and connect people of all ages to nature and the links between backyard canyons the ocean. Restoring these lands will provide additional open space for the enjoyment and benefit of the community as a whole.

I am happy to offer my support to the Endangered Habitats Conservancy proposed project and I ask the California Coastal Conservancy to grant their request for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Saldana".

Lori Saldana
Assembly Member, 76th Assembly District

May 24, 2010

Sam Schuchat
Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat,

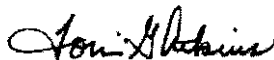
I am pleased to write this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's application and proposal to conduct habitat restoration in Swan Canyon, an urban canyon located in the community of City Heights, San Diego County.

I was honored to represent the Third District of the City of San Diego on the San Diego City Council for eight years. My district included the community of City Heights and the canyon that is the focus of this proposed project. As a City Council member representing this area, I came to be very familiar with Swan Canyon and the issues surrounding its degraded habitat and lack of access for public use and enjoyment.

Although our urban canyons represent a vital natural resource, many of these canyon areas, including Swan Canyon, have become degraded over time and are occasionally host to illicit or illegal activities. The non-native vegetation that has developed in the canyon, particularly *arundo donax*, often facilitate these activities and are, in a sense, a threat to community members as well as to native vegetation and local wildlife. The removal of these non-native plant species and their replacement with native plants, as well as stewardship and maintenance of trail systems that connect to local neighborhoods and public schools surrounding the canyon, will significantly enhance this local community resource.

I am very pleased that this project may be able to receive the support of the California Coastal Conservancy and I am proud to endorse it and to support the work of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy and its local community partners in City Heights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Toni Atkins".

Toni Atkins
Former Deputy Mayor and
San Diego City Councilmember



San Diego Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education

EUGENE BRUCKER EDUCATION CENTER
4100 Normal Street, Room 2231, San Diego,
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Phone: (619) 725-5550 Fax: (619) 297-5624

Richard Barrera
President

May 14, 2010

Sam Schuchat
Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat,

I am pleased to endorse the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's proposal and application to the California Coastal Conservancy requesting funding support for the restoration and stewardship of Swan Canyon in the community of City Heights, San Diego County. San Diego Unified School District operates several public schools in the vicinity of Swan Canyon and has previously partnered with nonprofit organizations and the local community to improve the canyon and make it a teaching and learning resource regarding environmental issues.

We are excited to see this initiative is progressing and that a large scale effort will be undertaken to remove non-native plants in the canyon (including *arundo dorax*, which often shelters illegal and dangerous activities in the canyon vicinity) and to plant native plants and create native habitat. We view this project as a crucial step in the long-term stewardship of the canyon, in order to enhance the ability of local residents, including school children, to enjoy the canyon as a public natural resource. I am extremely pleased to see Swan Canyon developing as a location for environmental education initiatives that focus upon the unique ecosystems of San Diego.

Sincerely,

Richard Barrera
President, San Diego Unified School District